

Psalm 19:1–6: The Creative Work of Christ; Its Testimony to the Precanon World of the Old Testament; Those Who Worshiped the Creation followed Astrology; Those Who Worshiped the Creator Learned from Astronomy

Psalm 19: Superscription - To the choir director. A Psalm of David.

19:1 - The heavens are telling of the glory of God [the teleological method of evangelism]; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

The creation testifies that its origin was not through random happenstance and its order demands a Designer. The hypotheses of the Big Bang¹ and dark matter² are among the ideas tossed around by cosmologists who admit they do not have enough data to construct a Law of Cosmology because of the size of the universe.

Why is the universe so unbelievably large? One might think it is God's sense of humor to confuse the cosmologists. But it turns out the vast distance of the heavenly bodies is necessary to cause them to appear stationary from platform earth.

The fixed stars provide a background in front of which the moon and planets move along their designated paths. The timing is precise and predictable.

Psalm 19:2 - Day to day pours forth speech [נָבֵא nava': to bubble forth: the creation's testimony is always there], and night to night reveals knowledge.

The consistency of the creation reveals the consistency of the Creator. His provision of day and night, seasons, and the cycle of years enables man to observe the importance of order in the universe and enables him to structure an ordered life on earth.

True order in life demands order in the soul, therefore, the study of the stars brings the individual to God consciousness, i.e., the Teleological approach to salvation. Positive volition results in salvation and divine order inspires personal order.

Psalm 19:3 - There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard.

The stars do not literally speak. The ancients grew in grace through logic and reasoning. The entire story of salvation is blazoned on the skies in the form of the constellations.

¹ "Galaxies like the Milky Way populate the universe in all directions to at least a billion light years. Wave-length measurements of the light emitted from these galaxies show that they are all receding from the earth with speeds proportional to their distances. This pattern is exactly what would result from an explosion, even if the solar system is not at its center, and led George Gammow to describe the formation of the universe as a *big bang* from an initial hot and dense collection of matter and energy" (D. C. Morton, "Astronomy," in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Merrill C. Tenney [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976], 1:394).

² "The ultimate destiny of our expanding universe depends on how much matter it contains and whether that will be enough to one day stop the expansion. When astronomers count up all the visible matter—the stuff that gives off light—the answer is clearly no. But they have learned over the past several decades that the answer isn't so cut-and-dried. Observations reveal that vast halos of invisible matter surround galaxies and galaxy clusters. This dark matter adds up to about ten times more mass than the visible stars, gas, and dust seen in galaxies. And there may be more." (<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/hawking/strange/html/dark.html>).

Psalm 19:4 - Their line [לִיָּק *qol*: voice; LXX: φωνή *phonē*] has gone out through all the earth, and their utterance to the end of the world.³ In them He has placed a tent for the sun,

The teleological message of God consciousness is transmitted every night through the stellar display and its silent voice extends “through all the earth.” The “tent for the sun” is a way of describing nighttime.

Psalm 19:5 - which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; it rejoices as a strong man to run its course.

The radiance of a new husband emerging from the bridal chamber illustrates the rising of the sun. It is then compared to a strong man who runs a course; the sun methodically moves along its assigned path day by day. The sun “trains” each day. It does not take a rest or deviate from its assigned round. Likewise, the integrity of God.

Psalm 19:6 - Its rising is from one end of the heavens, and its circuit to the other end of them; and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

The sun is the source of physical life on earth. Without the heat provided by the sun our planet would become as uninhabitable as Mars is presently. It provides the energy for photosynthesis of plants, warmth for human and animal life, and the energy that controls our global weather systems.

Quite often in heathen societies, the sun is worshipped because its benefits are observed in a benighted way. When changing weather patterns occur due to fluctuations in global climate, the result can introduce either beneficial or detrimental effects on agrarian societies that depend on proper rainfall for the production of crops and food for animals.

Some societies that worship the sun will perform rituals to praise the sun’s benefits or assuage it when circumstances become dire, even to the grotesque level of human sacrifice, an activity quite common among the meso-American Indian tribes when European explorers discovered the New World.

Our study has now reached the point where we are going to investigate the astronomical observations by the Magi. What they saw in the night sky in conjunction with their knowledge of the Hebrew canon enabled them to anticipate and then confirm the birth of the Anointed One.

The Magi were not involved in astrology. They were the scientists of their day who understood the message of the celestial array. The planets’ movements among the carousel of constellations created a nightly light show across the heavens. Certain of their arrangements announced to the Magi the birth of the King of the Jews. It was the appearance of “His star” in a certain configuration that gave them the key to the arrival of the Messiah prophesied by Daniel in the ninth chapter of his book.

We are now ready to move forward in our study and consult the next three authors, each of whom concludes that the “star” of Bethlehem was indeed among those God created “in the beginning.” But which one actually nails it? We shall see.

³ This portion of the verse is quoted by Paul in Romans 10:18.